

Message Text

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SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN ON USG POLICY TOWARD
WESTERN EUROPEAN COMMUNISM

REF: STATE 76635

1. FOLLOWING IS TRANSCRIPT OF PORTION OF APRIL 6 NOON PRESS
BRIEFING RELATING TO SUBJECT AND REFTEL:

QUOTE

Q: HODDING, DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY TODAY ABOUT THE
AMERICAN POSITION TOWARD THE PROSPECT OF COMMUNIST PARTICI-
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PATION IN FRIENDLY WESTERN EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS?

A: YES, I DO. WE BELIEVE THAT THE POSITION OF A COMMUNIST
PARTY IN A PARTICULAR COUNTRY IS A MATTER TO BE DECIDED BY
THE PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE COUNTRY CONCERNED. WE DO
NOT PROPOSE TO INVOLVE OURSELVES IN THE PROCESSES BY WHICH
THEY REACH THEIR DECISIONS ON IT.

THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT OUR ATTITUDE IS ONE OF INDIFFERENCE.
WE ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO OUR ABILITY TO WORK WITH THE
COUNTRIES OF WESTERN EUROPE ON MATTERS OF VITAL INTEREST.
OUR ABILITY TO DO SO COULD BE IMPAIRED IF THESE GOVERNMENTS

CAME TO BE DOMINATED BY POLITICAL PARTIES WHOSE PARTICULAR
TRADITIONS, VALUES, AND PRACTICES ARE ALIEN TO THE
FUNDAMENTAL DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES AND COMMON INTERESTS ON
WHICH OUR RELATIONS WITH WESTERN EUROPE ARE BASED.

Q: IS THAT THE END OF THE STATEMENT?

A: THAT IS THE END OF THE STATEMENT.

Q: MAY I ASK A QUESTION ABOUT IT? YOU TALK ABOUT
"POLITICAL PARTIES WHOSE PARTICULAR TRADITIONS...", DOES
THIS RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY, THEN, THAT A COMMUNIST PARTY
IN WESTERN EUROPE MIGHT NOW SAY THAT IT HAS TAKEN A
DIFFERENT VIEWPOINT FROM WHAT ITS TRADITIONS HAD BEEN
CONCERNING THE POSSIBILITY OF PLURALISTIC GOVERNMENT IN
CHANGES OF FUTURE GOVERNMENTS BY FREE ELECTIONS?

A: HENRY, I'M NOT PREPARED TO GO BEYOND THE STATEMENT.

Q: ONE POINT OF CLARIFICATION: YOU SPEAK ABOUT THE
DOMINATION OF THESE GOVERNMENTS BY SUCH PARTIES. WELL,
THE QUESTION IN MANY PLACES IS PARTICIPATION, NOT DOMINA-
TION.

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A: AGAIN, I'LL HAVE TO REFER TO THE STATEMENT ITSELF.

Q: HODDING, ARE THERE ANY NEW GUIDELINES FOR US DIPLOMATS
OVERSEAS ON WHETHER OR NOT TO HAVE CONTACT WITH COMMUNIST
OFFICIALS?

A: INsofar AS I KNOW, THE SAME PROCEDURES ARE IN EFFECT AS
HAVE BEEN IN EFFECT BEFORE.

Q: AND BEFORE THIS ADMINISTRATION CAME INTO POWER?

A: I KNOW OF NO CHANGES.

Q: HODDING, ON BOTH HENRY'S QUESTION AND ROY'S, CAN YOU
TAKE THOSE QUESTIONS AND GET US ANSWERS RATHER THAN JUST
SIMPLY REFER US TO THESE WORDS THAT NEED CLARIFICATION IN
OUR MINDS?

A: WHAT I WILL DO IS, I WILL ATTEMPT TO DO IT WITHOUT SUGGESTING THAT I CAN, BUT I'LL BE GLAD TO TRY, AND I WILL.

Q: HODDING, ON YOUR LAST RESPONSE ON THE GUIDELINES, RECENTLY SOMETHING WAS MADE OF THE FACT THAT THE AMBASSADOR TO ROME MET WITH INGRAO. COULD YOU RESEARCH THE LAST TIME A US AMBASSADOR IN ROME, OR ANY RANKING MEMBER OF THE

EMBASSY IN ROME HAD CONTACT WITH A RANKING MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY? WOULD YOU?

A: YES, I WILL.

Q: JUST AS A POINT OF INTEREST, HODDING, IS IT A MATTER OF POLICY NOW TO PROVIDE VISAS TO MEMBERS OF COMMUNIST PARTIES WHO WANT TO VISIT THE UNITED STATES?

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A: I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT.

Q: WILL YOU TAKE THAT, BECAUSE PRESIDENT CARTER HAS, ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, SAID THAT HE IS REMOVING THOSE RESTRICTIONS.

A: I KNOW THAT OUR ENTIRE POLICY IN THIS AREA IS UNDER REVIEW AND I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THAT REVIEW HAS BEEN COMPLETED. AND I THINK UNTIL IT IS, WE WON'T HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT.

Q: HODDING, IF YOU WILL EXCUSE ME, THERE SEEMS TO BE -- THIS STATEMENT OF YOURS SEEMS TO BE BASICALLY, INTERNALLY CONTRADICTORY:

ON THE ONE HAND YOU SAY THAT WE ARE NOT GOING TO DO ANY-THING ABOUT IT. ON THE OTHER HAND, YOU SAY: IT IS A MATTER OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THIS COUNTRY.

IF IT IS, INDEED THEN, A GREAT MATTER OF IMPORTANCE WHAT IS THE UNITED STATES GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

A: I BELIEVE THAT THE STATEMENT, IN ITSELF, ANSWERS YOUR QUESTION. WE ARE INDICATING THAT OUR ATTITUDE IS NOT ONE OF INDIFFERENCE, AND WE ARE INDICATING THAT WE BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD BE -- OUR ABILITY TO CONTINUE TO WORK WITH THE COUNTRIES OF WESTERN EUROPE WOULD BE IMPAIRED IF THESE COUNTRIES CAME UNDER DOMINATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND SO FORTH, AS IT SAYS.

Q: YES. AND THAT BEING THE CASE, AND YOU ARE NOT GOING TO

INVOLVE YOURSELF, THE GOVERNMENT, IN THE PROCESS -- WHAT, THEN, ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

A: WELL OF COURSE THE STATEMENT THAT WE ARE NOT INVOLVING OURSELVES IN THE PROCESS IS A STATEMENT OF NATIONAL POLICY
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AND IS A REITERATION OF WHAT THIS ADMINISTRATION HAS SAID A NUMBER OF TIMES.

WHAT WE ARE DOING IS INDICATING THAT OUR ATTITUDE IS NOT

ONE OF INDIFFERENCE TO THE POSSIBILITIES RAISED.

Q: OF DOMINATION?

A: OF DOMINATION.

Q: BUT CAN YOU TAKE THE QUESTION OF: IS THERE INDIFFERENCE TO JUST PARTICIPATION? BECAUSE AS SOMEONE SAID EARLIER, THAT IS WHERE THE BIG DEBATE WAS, LAST YEAR IN THIS COUNTRY. NOT ON DOMINATION. EVERYONE WAS AGAINST COMMUNIST DOMINATION.

A: I WILL SEE IF I CAN GET ANY FURTHER CLARIFICATION ON THE STATEMENT.

Q: IN THAT CONTEXT, HODDING, ALSO, IT APPEARED TO BE A POLICY, AT LEAST UNWRITTEN, PERHAPS, THAT THERE WOULD BE NO CONTACT BETWEEN OFFICIALS OF THIS COUNTRY AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTIES IN ITALY, FRANCE AND SO ON. HAS THAT POLICY CHANGED?

Q: AT THE AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL?

A: I THINK THAT I HAVE ALREADY --

ONE QUESTION MAY ANSWER THAT. I HAVE ALREADY TAKEN A QUESTION OF: WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME THERE WAS CONTACT?

INSOFAR AS POLICY GOES, I WILL CHECK INTO THAT.

Q: HODDING, WOULD IT BE THE POLICY OF OUR AMBASSADORS,
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SAY, TO DEAL WITH THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTIES?

A. I UNDERSTAND.

Q: IN THE BACKGROUND WE ARE WORKING AGAINST IS A STATEMENT BY KISSINGER, ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS -- (REQUEST TO SPEAK UP). THE BACKGROUND WE ARE WORKING AGAINST, IS A STATEMENT THAT KISSINGER MADE ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS; THAT UNTIL

COMMUNISTS ACTUALLY CAME INTO POWER, THERE WOULD BE NO CONTACT WITH THEM; AND I WOULD LIKE TO FIND OUT WHETHER THAT HAS BEEN CHANGED.

A: ALL RIGHT, I WILL FIND OUT.

Q: CAN YOU FIND THAT?

Q: HODDING, DID THIS QUESTION COME UP IN THE MEETING THIS PAST WEEKEND, BETWEEN PRESIDENT GISCARD AND THE SECRETARY?

A: I DON'T KNOW.

Q: THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION FOLLOWED THE PRACTICE OF WARNING POTENTIAL GOVERNMENTS -- QUIETLY. YOU SEEM TO HAVE ADOPTED THE OPPOSITE POLICY BY WARNING THEM HERE.

IS IT A FAIR INFERENCE TO DRAW THAT WHAT YOU HAVE READ CONSTITUTES A WARNING?

A: WHAT THIS CONSTITUTES IS WHAT IT SAYS.

Q: HODDING, IS THIS BEING CONVEYED IN ANY OTHER WAY, APART FROM THIS ROOM, TODAY.

A: THIS MESSAGE HAS BEEN MADE KNOWN, AND WILL BE MADE KNOWN TO OUR VARIOUS EMBASSIES. UNQUOTE

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2. THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WERE POSTED BY THE SPOKESMAN APRIL 7:

QUOTE:

Q: WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME A RANKING EMBASSY OFFICER IN ROME WAS IN CONTACT WITH A RANKING MEMBER OF THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY?

A: IT IS THE CUSTOM IN ITALY FOR A NEW AMBASSADOR TO CALL ON THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, AMONG OTHERS. THE LATTER IS NOW A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY. AMBASSADOR GARDNER PAID A COURTESY CALL ON HIM IN HIS OFFICIAL CAPACITY AND THE

MEETING HAD NO POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE.

Q: IS THERE A CHANGE IN THE POLICY ENUNCIATED BY FORMER SECRETARY KISSINGER THAT "UNTIL A COMMUNIST PARTY ACTUALLY COMES TO POWER IN EUROPE, THERE WOULD BE NO CONTACT WITH IT"?

A: MOST OF OUR EMBASSIES IN EUROPE HAVE MAINTAINED CONTACT IN VARIOUS WAYS AND AT VARIOUS LEVELS DEPENDING ON THE LOCAL SITUATION. OUR EMBASSIES IN PARIS AND ROME, FOR EXAMPLE, HAVE MAINTAINED WORKING LEVEL CONTACTS WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTIES FOR SOME YEARS.

Q: WHAT IS THE US VIEW OF "PARTICIPATION" OF A COMMUNIST PARTY IN A WESTERN EUROPEAN GOVERNMENT AS OPPOSED TO "DOMINATION" OF A GOVERNMENT BY THAT PARTY?

A: IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ANSWER THIS QUESTION IN THE ABSTRACT. OUR VIEW WOULD DEPEND ON FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

WHICH CANNOT NOW BE ACCURATELY READ OR PREDICTED.

Q: WHAT DOES OUR STATEMENT MEAN BY "TRADITIONS" OF A UNCLASSIFIED

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PARTY; DOES THIS MEAN THAT A PARTY CANNOT CHANGE ITS MIND?

A: IT REFERS TO THE IDEOLOGICAL BASES AND GOVERNING PRACTICES OF A COMMUNIST PARTY. WE DO NOT INTEND TO ADDRESS SITUATIONS WHICH HAVE NOT ARISEN. UNQUOTE. VANCE

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